

Message Text

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63

ACTION NEA-13

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 CU-04 IO-14 NIC-01 DRC-01 /147 W

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R 221602Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6140

USINT CAIRO

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

RUFHGVXUSMISSION GENEVA 433

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USINT BAGHDAD

USINT DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 0866

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

EO 11652: NA DECON 1WWXUT

TAGS: PINS PFOR XF

SUBJ: LEFTIST-FEDAYEEN CAMPAIGN AGAINST SUEZ DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT

SUMMARY: STRONG PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN BEING GENERATED
IN BEIRUT AGAINST SUEZ DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT. CAMPAIGN
APPARENTLY BEING LED BY FEDAYEEN (LESS FATAH),
IRAQ, LIBYA WITH PROBABILITY OF SOME SUPPORT FROM
SOVS AND SYRIA. SEVERAL FEDAYEEN BODIES HAVE DENOUNCED
SUEZ AGREEMENT, AND THERE IS GENERAL STUDENT STRIKE AND
RALLY AGAINST IT PLANNED FOR JAN 23. PLO LEADER 'ARAFAT
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SO FAR APPEARS ANXIOUS TO DEFEND EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI AGREEMENT,

AND HASSAN SABRI AL KHOLI COMING HERE TO EXPLAIN EGYPTIAN
POINT OF VIEW TO GOL AND POSSIBLY TO FEDAYEEN. END SUMMARY

1. HEIGHTENED LEVEL OF CONFUSION, DISCORD AND DISARRAY
HAS OVERTAKEN FEDAYEEN MOVEMENT FOLLOWING PUBLICATION
HERE OF JAN 19 PLO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STATEMENT
DENOUNCING SUEZ DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT (FBIU M191835)
AND 'ARAKAT'S SWIFT DISAVOWAL OF THAT STATEMENT IN CAIRO
(FBIS M202212). WE UNDERSTAND PLO EX COMM STATEMENT WAS
APPROVED AT MEETING HELD JAN 19 AT SA'IQA'S REQUEST AND
ATTENDED ONLY BY REPS OF SA'IQA, PFLP, PDFLP AND ALF
WITHOUT PLO CHAIRMAN JARAFAT, FATAH REP FAROUQ QADDOUMI
AND VARIOUS "INDEPENDENT" EX COMM MEMBERS (RESPONSIBLE TO
FATAH GUIDANCE).

2. WE ARE TOLD THAT 'ARAFAT, FOLLOWING HIS PUBLIC DISAVOWAL
IN CAIRO OF PLO EX COMM STATEMENT, SENT WORD TO
SALAH KHALAF AND FATAH LEADERSHIP DEMANDING THAT EHY
AND OTHER PLO LEADERS CEASE ISSUING PUBLIC STATEMENTS
ABOUT DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT UNTIL HE RETURNED TO
BRIEF THEM ON "INTERESTING AND IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS"
AFFECTING FEDAYEEN-EGYPTIAN AND EGYPTIAN-SYRIAN RELATIONS
THAT EMERGED FROM HIS RECENT TALKS WITH SADAT AT AUWAN.
DESPITE 'ARAFAT'S PLEA, HOWEVER, PFLP, PDFLP, ALF AND
PFLP/GC SPOKESMEN HERE HAD ALREADY ISSUED SEPARATE STATEMENTS
DENOUNCING EGYPT FOR HAVING BETRAYED ARAB CAUSE.
IN ADDITION, PFLP REP TO PLO EX COMM, AHMED YAMANI,
ON JAN 22 PUBLICLY DISPUTED 'ARAFAT'S CONTENTION THAT
JAN 19 MEETING WAS "ILLEGAL". YAMANI MAINTAINED THAT
THERE HAD BEEN QUORUM AND THAT ABSENCE OF FATAH REPS
WAS NOT SUFFICIENT REASON FOR PLO EX COMM TO DELAY
ACTION ON SO IMPORTANT A MATTER. 'ARAFAT IS DUE TO
ARRIVE BEIRUT FROM RIYADH TODAY, AND WE EXPECT SOME
LIVELY DISCUSSIONS WILL TAKE PLACE AMONG PLO LEADERSHIP
FOLLOWING HIS RETURN.

3. IN ADDITION, TO FEDAYEEN AGITATION AGAINST
SUEZ DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT, WE NOTE EMERGENCE OF STRONG
ANTI-DISENGAGEMENT PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN AMONG LEFTIST
AND "PROGRESSIVE" CIRCLES IN BEIRUT. PROTEST RALLY
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AND STRIKE BY MULTITUDE OF ARAB STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS
BEING ORGANIZED HERE FOR JAN 23, AND LOCAL LEFTIST, PRO-
FEDAYEEN PRESS IS PULLING OUT ALL STOPS IN PRINTING
WILDEST POSSIBLE ALLEGATIONS RE "SECRET CONCESSIONS"
WHICH SADAT IS IMAGINED TO HAVE MADE TO ISRAEL AND
SEC KISSINGER. MOST OF HIS INTOXICATING STUFF
IS OBVIOUSLY BEING PROVIDED BY IRAQUIS AND LIBYANS, BUT
LOCAL COMMUNIST AND PRO-MOSCOW PAPERS HAVE HELPED CAST

SUSPICIONS ON SADAT AND GOE. SYRIAN ROLE IS LESS
OBVIOUS, BUT WE SUSPECT UARG OF HAVING HAND BEHIND-
SCENES IN PROTEST EFFORT, IF ONLY THROUGH SA'IQA.

4. COMMENT: (A) AMID ALL THIS TURMOIL, WE ARE STRUCK
BY MANNER IN WHICH FATAH LEADERSHIP WAS CAUGHT NAPPING
AT JAN 19 PLO EX COMM MEETING, BUT ALSO BY FACT THAT
'ARAFAT HAS DISPLAYED UNCUSTOMARY COURAGE IN PUBLICLY
OPPOSING WAVE OF EMOTION AGAINST EGYPT AND DISENGAGEMENT
AGREEMENT. HIS COURAGE MAY EVAPORATE (AS IT HAS
ON PAST OCCASIONS) ONCE HE HAS HAD CHANCE TO GAUGE
RESPECTIVE STRENGTHS OF MODERATES AND HARDLINERS:
BUT SO FAR HE HAS BEEN FAITHFUL TO WHAT IS REPORTED
TO BE HIS AGREEMENT WITH SADAT TO SUPPORT DISENGAGEMENT.

(B) SYRIAN AND SOVIET MOTIVATIONS IN HELPING TO
AROUSE POPULAR FEELING AGAINST DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT
ARE MORE OBSCURE: BUT WE BELIEVE THAT -- FOR THEIR OWN
REASONS-- THEY ARE NOT AVERSE TO KEEPING PALESTINIAN
POT BOILING, AT SAME TIME BEING CAREFUL TO PRESERVE
THEIR OWN OPTIONS RE FUTURE PARTICIPATION IN SETTLEMENT
EFFORT. ONLY DANGER IN THIS DOUBLE GAME, OF COURSE, IS
POSSIBILITY THAT PALESTINIAN AND LEFTIST ANTI-EGYPTIAN,
ANTI-DISENGAGEMENT FEELING, IF AROUSED TO FEVER-PITCH,
COULD MAKE IT SOMEWHAT MORE DIFFICULT FOR UACG AND USSR
PLAY FUTURE POSITIVE ROLE SHOULD THEIR INTERESTS SO DICTATE.
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